Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in this application:

Listing of Claims

1. (currently amended) A system for identifying an incoming caller to a call-receiving party, the system comprising

(1) means for identifying a telephone number from which an incoming call has been placed;

(2) means for associating a plurality of aural announcements with said identified telephone number, wherein said plurality of aural announcements identify the incoming caller to the call-receiving party; and

(3) means for selecting and playing, upon receipt of said incoming call, a first one of said plurality of aural announcements ~~announcement~~ in response to receipt of a first selected ring pulse, and for selecting and playing a second one of said plurality of aural announcements ~~announcement~~ in response to receipt of a second ring pulse during said incoming call.

2. (original) A system for identifying an incoming caller to a call-receiving party, the system comprising

- means for storing a first plurality of selectable announcements;

- means for detecting connection of a first telephone call to a telephone line of the call-receiving party;

- means for determining a telephone number of said first telephone call upon said detecting means detecting connection of said first telephone call to said telephone line of the call-receiving party;

- means for associating said first plurality of selectable announcements with said telephone number of said first telephone call;

- means for selecting a first announcement from said first plurality of selectable announcements to be played in response to a first selected ring pulse received at said telephone line;

- means for aurally playing said first announcement in lieu of said first selected ring pulse producing a first ringing sound;

- means for selecting a second announcement from said first plurality of selectable announcements to be played in response to a second selected ring pulse received at said telephone line; and

means for aurally playing said second announcement in lieu of said second selected ring pulse producing a second ringing sound.

3. (original) The system of claim 2, wherein said means for selecting said first announcement from said first plurality of selectable announcements and said means for selecting said second announcement from said first plurality of selectable announcements together comprise a single selecting means.

4. (original) The system of claim 3, wherein said single selecting means selects said first and second aural announcements from said first plurality of selectable announcements randomly.

5. (original) The system of claim 2, wherein said single selecting means selects said first and second aural announcements from said first plurality of selectable announcements pseudo-randomly.

6. (previously presented) A system for aurally identifying an incoming caller before answering a telephone, the system comprising

associating means for associating a first plurality of aural announcements with a first telephone number and for associating a second plurality of aural announcements with a second telephone number, wherein said first plurality of aural announcements identify a first caller to a call-receiving party, and wherein said second plurality of aural announcements identify a second caller to said call-receiving party;

identifying means for identifying a first plurality of ring pulses generated in response to a first incoming telephone call originating from said first telephone number, and for identifying a second plurality of ring pulses generated in response to a second incoming telephone call originating from said second telephone number,

selecting means for (i) selecting a first aural announcement from said first plurality of aural announcements in response to a first ring pulse in said first plurality of ring pulses; (ii) selecting a second aural announcement from said first plurality of aural announcements in response to a second ring pulse in said first plurality of ring pulses; (iii) selecting a first aural announcement from said second plurality of aural announcements in response to a first ring pulse in said second plurality of ring pulses; and (iv) selecting a second aural

announcement from said second plurality of aural announcements in response to a second ring pulse in said second plurality of ring pulses; and

playing means for (i) playing said first aural announcement from said first plurality of aural announcements in lieu of said first ring pulse in said first plurality of ring pulses; (ii) playing said second aural announcement from said first plurality of aural announcements in lieu of said second ring pulse in said first plurality of ring pulses; (iii) playing said first aural announcement from said second plurality of aural announcements in lieu of said first ring pulse in said second plurality of ring pulses; and (iv) playing said second aural announcement from said second plurality of aural announcements in lieu of said second ring pulse in said second plurality of ring pulses.

7. (original) The system of claim 6, wherein said selecting means selects said first and second aural announcements from said first plurality of aural announcements seriatim, whereby said first selected aural announcement from said first plurality of aural announcements is a first aural announcement in said first plurality of aural announcements, and whereby said second selected aural announcement from said first plurality of aural announcements is a second aural announcement in said first plurality of aural announcements.

8. (original) The system of claim 6, wherein said selecting means selects said first and second aural announcements from said first plurality of aural announcements randomly.

9. (original) The system of claim 6, wherein said selecting means selects said first and second aural announcements from said first plurality of aural announcements pseudo-randomly.

10. (original) The system of claim 6, wherein said selecting means selects said first and second aural announcements from said first plurality of aural announcements randomly, and wherein said selecting means selects said first and second aural announcements from said second plurality of aural announcements randomly.

11. (original) The system of claim 6, wherein said selecting means selects said first and second aural announcements from said first plurality of aural announcements pseudo-randomly, and wherein said selecting means selects said first and second aural announcements from said second plurality of aural announcements pseudo-randomly.

12. (original) The system of claim 6, wherein said selecting means selects said first and second aural announcements from said first plurality of aural announcements randomly, and wherein said selecting means selects said first and second aural announcements from said second plurality of aural announcements pseudo-randomly.

13. (original) The system of claim 6, wherein said selecting means selects said first and second aural announcements from said first plurality of aural announcements seriatim, whereby said first selected aural announcement from said first plurality of aural announcements is a first aural announcement in said first plurality of aural announcements, and whereby said second selected aural announcement from said first plurality of aural announcements is a second aural announcement in said first plurality of aural announcements; and wherein said selecting means selects said first and second aural announcements from said second plurality of aural announcements pseudo-randomly.

14. (previously presented) A method of identifying an incoming caller, the method comprising the steps of

(1) identifying an assigned telephone number from which a telephone call originates;

(2) checking a storage location for a plurality of announcements associated with said assigned telephone number, wherein each announcement of said plurality of announcements is also associated with a call-receiving party's telephone number, and wherein each announcement of said plurality of announcements is recorded in the incoming caller's own voice;

(3) selecting a first associated announcement from said plurality of announcements associated with said assigned telephone number; and

(4) playing said selected first associated announcement.

15. (previously presented) A method of identifying an incoming caller, the method comprising the steps of

- storing a plurality of announcements in a first memory location;

- associating said plurality of announcements with a particular caller's telephone number;

- associating said plurality of announcements with a call-receiving party's telephone line;

- monitoring said call-receiving party's telephone line for an incoming call from said particular caller's telephone number;

- selecting, upon receipt of the incoming call from said particular caller's telephone number at said call-receiving party's telephone line, a first announcement from said plurality of announcements associated with said particular caller's telephone number and associated with said call-receiving party's telephone line; and

- playing said first announcement in lieu of said call-receiving party's telephone ringing.

16. (previously presented) A method of identifying a telephone caller to a call-receiving party, the method comprising the steps of

identifying a telephone number of an incoming telephone call;

searching a memory location for at least three aural announcements associated with said identified telephone number and associated with the call-receiving party;

selecting a first aural announcement from said at least three aural announcements;

retrieving said first aural announcement from said memory location; and

playing said first aural announcement for the call-receiving party in lieu of said incoming telephone call generating a ring tone.

17. (original) The method of claim 16, wherein said first aural announcement is selected randomly or pseudo-randomly from said at least three aural announcements.

18. (previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said selecting step is performed by selecting each announcement from said plurality of announcements seriatim.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said selecting step is performed by randomly selecting each announcement from said plurality of announcements.

20. (previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said selecting step is performed by pseudo-randomly selecting each announcement from said plurality of announcements.

21. (previously presented) A system for announcing a particular communication sender of an incoming communication to a particular communication recipient, the system comprising the following:

a first storage device adapted to store parameters indicative of the particular communication sender;

a second storage device adapted to store a plurality of outgoing announcements associated with the particular communication sender when attempting to communicate with the particular communication recipient;

a receiver adapted to receive the incoming communication;

an identifier adapted to identify an identified parameter of the incoming communication;

a comparator adapted to compare the identified parameter of the incoming communication to said stored parameters in said first storage device and to thereby identify the particular communication sender;

a selector for picking a selected outgoing announcement from said plurality of outgoing announcements associated with the particular communication sender when attempting to communicate with the particular communication recipient; and

an output device adapted to output said selected outgoing announcement and aurally identify the particular communication sender.

22. (previously presented) The system of claim 2, wherein said first aural announcement is different from said second aural announcement.